

## Instructions for Preparing a Vermont licensed Teacher Letter Assessment

16 V.S.A. §166b (d)(1) provides that an end-of-the-year assessment may be done by a teacher licensed in Vermont in a form designated by the commissioner.

A teacher may choose to use the form provided by the Department of Education or may write a letter which contains the same information as requested on the form. It is expected that the teacher will review the student's curriculum and the student's content knowledge and/or skills in each subject area of the minimum course of study.

<p><i>Please ask your teacher to assess only one child in each letter.</i></p>
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**An assessment must include a face-to-face meeting with the child.** The student should demonstrate, during the face-to-face meeting, his/her skill in reading, writing, and math, unless the teacher is confident of the child's progressing abilities in these areas based on prior assessment of the child.

For students with disabilities, the home study statute requires an adapted curriculum to assist the child in making progress commensurate with the student's age and abilities in each subject area. The adapted curriculum should also factor in any limitations resulting from the disability. If the teacher does not see progress commensurate with the child's age and ability, a disability may be emerging or it may have gone undetected. The teacher should indicate whether or not he/she has concerns with this lack of progress and that he/she has addressed these concerns with the parents. This is an important part of an assessment and the presence of a disability or suspected disability does not mean that the child cannot be homeschooled. The Department of Education provides technical assistance to parents of homeschoolers with disabilities. The teacher should indicate that he/she has been made aware of an existing disability and of adaptations that were made to the minimum course of study.

In section 6 of these forms, the teacher is asked to "render his/her professional opinion as to whether progress commensurate with the child's age and ability was made in each area, in terms of skill and/or content knowledge." The teacher must describe progress in terms of skills and/or content knowledge. Each area should contain some specific comments regarding content acquired or skills practiced by the student during the current school year. If the teacher has concerns, he/she should identify the concerns to the parent and discuss ways to improve progress.

For example, in math, a teacher may comment about a student progressing from one-digit to two digit multiplication or mastering a broad scope of geometric topics and skills. For science or history, a brief summary of the content studied, such as human anatomy or early American history, may be appropriate. Comments should reflect the individual learning experiences of the child in each area of the minimum course of study during the year.

In addition to describing the content which was learned in each area, the teacher must indicate progress commensurate with the age and ability of the child was made in each area. If the teacher

is confident that the child made progress commensurate with age and ability in each area, he/she may write a single statement to this effect at the end of the assessment.

The teacher is expected to author their own progress report. It is not sufficient to sign off on a letter authored by the parents as the intent of the assessment is to provide an objective measure of student progress.

*The home study office has a list of teachers who are interested in providing this service for homeschool families. Please contact us if you would like a copy of this list at (802)828-3352.*